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ESSAYS, CRITICAL AND PRACTICAL,

AND WEEKLY RECORD OF

Musical Science, Literature, and Entelligence.

" Ή μὲν ἁρμονία ἀόρατόν τι καὶ ἀσώματον, και πάγκαλόν τι και θεῖόν ἐστιν."

PLAT. Phado, sec. xxxvi.

Music is a something viewless and incorporeal, an all-gracious and a God-like thing.

MARCH 28, 1839.

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Mendelssohn being invited by the Philharmonic Directors to recommend to them one or two of the best singers in Germany, mentioned Miss Clara Novello and Mrs. Alfred Shaw. The directors, who were expecting some Fraulein von Donnerundblitzen or Madlle. von Hohenstanfen, must have been astonished at the pleasantry of recommending to them their own old familiar friends; yet a serious and sober truth is at the bottom of it.

English girls are better solo singers than German girls; at the present moment they are individually more cultivated, and in the aggregate of excellence have a great numerical superiority. We rejoice to do justice to the immense talent which the fair community of this country are developing in every department of practical music. Of lady singers of singular merit and promise we have a perfect swarm. They are no longer to be viewed as flippant dolls, got up, as the phrase is, in a certain music lesson for concert-room exhibitions, but as serious artists, who enter with enthusiasm into all the deepest passion of music, and sympathize in even the remotest conceptions of the composer.

Miss Clara Novello, Mrs. Shaw, Miss Hawes, Miss Woodyatt, Miss Birch, &c., are near enough in point of age to be considered as singing birds of one nest and one brood. At no period has our country been so rich in young native artists, with a long career before them, and we may expect many years of enjoyment from the exercise of their talents. To praise them will be as much the pleasure as the duty of the critic, for it may be done in real truth and sincerity, and not to gratify national vanity or the spleen of a party against foreigners.

The causes which have produced this group of female excellence offer an interesting subject for investigation. The principles of musical education are now better understood; the cultivation of feeling as well as science is more insisted on; instruction is earlier imparted and more solid in its kind than it was

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formerly; all these things have contributed in a degree to the superiority of our living vocalists. Many of our young lady singers are excellent players on the pianoforte, and derive from that source an insight into harmony and a perception of effect that they would else want; all of them are diligent concert-goers and attentive listeners to musical novelties of various kinds (the most improving habit that can be adopted by any one in quest of a style), so that they may in some sort be compared to bees that gather from all sorts of musical flowers material for their own honey.

Of such a mode of artist-life, English singers have now discovered the profitable secret; and by retaining an ideal perfection constantly before them-waking and dreaming to music-cherishing the art with passion-they frequently reach a great refinement of both expression and execution. The greatest impulse towards excellence which young Englishwomen have received, is to be traced to their contemplation of that model of heroical self-devotion to an object, which the divine Malibran—the ever-to-be-lamented angel of song—exhibited through the whole career of her artist existence. The influence of that passionate and intensely feeling woman, was not bounded by the triumphs of the theatre-it did not rest in sending home some thousands drunk with the rapture of music (magnetised and insomnolent as Paganini used to render his hearers); wondering how such harmony of look and gesture, such heartfelt tones in speaking and singing, such a truthful perception of situation, could always dwell and move together, and seem each to reflect a lustre on the other: its influence did not rest here-her performance touched a chord in the bosoms of her female auditory which has not since died away. The expression of Malibran is now participated by many singers, particularly English ones. The French, carried away by her daring and wonderful flights of arpeggio and roulade, have aimed more at those acquisitions-which are not to be neglected by a singer who would be constantly various, and gain not merely the suffrages of a party but of the whole public-the nobler part, however, which was certainly her expression, we have in a great degree appropriated.

Malibran was the musician both of nature and cultivation; she had more than the instinct of good harmony, discovered by some in the organ points she introduced into the cadences of her parts; she understood it scientifically, and was indefatigable in practice. It is a touching trait of the musician that she sung upon her deathbed, but a few hours before the long final silence came upon her. In Malibran there is a strong argument for the scientific training of the singer.

Banti, on the other hand—a woman of no education, elevated from the humblest sphere of Italian life to be Prima Donna of the Opera, never knew her notes; but without this, the mere sound of her voice, we have been assured, would often draw tears. We have heard from an eye-witness, that her parts in operas were played over to her, and she learned them as soon as she heard them.*

To hear the duets of Banti and Grassini, both women of an irregular life, creatures of impulse, and averse to none of the sources from which musical inspira-

⁴ This singer was the attached friend of Taylor, the Manager of the Italian Opera, whom embarassed affairs had king consigned to the King's Bench. She made the most generous sacrifices for him.

tion could be drawn, was, we are assured, to experience the most perfect transporting pleasure of the lyric scene.

Catalani may be adduced as an example of a bad musician creating effect by the mere volubility, quality, and extent of her organ; but the influence of that performer was as superficial as her musical qualities. Without going into many instances of the cultivated and uncultivated, pro and con, we believe that wild native genius is the exception to the rule which makes solid instruction in harmony the true road to perfection in singing.

There is one point, however, which we deem necessary to notice in our young singers, namely, their increasing aversion to the stage. Whatever maidenly reluctance there may exist to the profession of dramatic singing, it is that alone which draws out the finer qualities of expression-which warms with impulse, and by the influence of situation renders a singer truly great. We may be pleased with the fine taste of concert-singing, but it will be a "holy, cold," sort of pleasure, compared with that we should experience from one who has warmed a natural genius by the fire and enthusiasm of the drama. Our young ladies seem more disposed to put on surplices and sing in cathedrals, than to be invested with the romantic charm of the theatre, in spite of all that Mozart Weber, and Beethoven have done for it. Donna Annas, Zerlinas, Susannas, Countess-the whole tribe of singing actresses, from the heroine to the waitingmaid, are at a discount. English girls know more of 4 and 4 than of the dramatic method of being handsomely encircled in the arms of a lover; what 'looks and tones," as Mr. Moore has it, such a situation demands; what language should be addressed to a tyrannical father or a faithless inamorato-in fact the whole circle of passion, which far more instructs the human heart in expression than either 4 or 3, is known to them only by theory. We have heard of very good theoretical lovers, and even husbands and wives-but nothing can supersedethe practical in such matters. The frigid, formal, perpetually conscious state of mere concert-singing, leaves three parts of the natural feeling in a state of hopeless torpidity. The Italian singers show by their restlessness in concerts, till acting comes to their relief, how deeply involved with their excellence is the idea of situation.

We do not remember one instance of a female singer whose name has been recorded by historians, with whom the stage is unconnected. An artist like Malibran, who, in following that profession, is untainted by its vices—who, equally remote from the prude and the coquet, abandons herself to her feelings with all the simplicity of a child is, even morally considered, estimable and beautiful in the idea. The theatre is not with her a school of melodramatic conventions, or an allay to a harpy-like greediness of gold; it offers us a romantic pleasure, in which our ideal is satisfied, and our sympathies touched by the sweetness of love in all its circumstances, and from which we never return home but with a heightened pulse, and renewed faith in the poetry of existence. Had Malibran been plain Mrs. ——, a good house-wifely sort of person, and never masqueraded on the stage in the peasant dress of Ninetta, the little hat of Amina, the velvet suit of Romeo, or the tiara of Semiramide, she would have wanted an

outlet for the passion with which her heart was bursting; her genius would have been trammelled and circumscribed; she would have been no heroine—have neither suffered nor struggled for the great object which she finally accomplished, and we should not think of her in her silent resting-place at Lacken, with that sentiment of affectionate reverence which is now universal.

In the choice of a profession nature is doubtless to be consulted. But we shall not think our artists have a fair chance, as vocalists, until dramatic and other correlative studies become a part of the education of the young singer.

THE LATE ADOLPHE NOURRIT.

[We were going this week to offer some remarks on the death of this distinguished vocalist, whose virtues and ability were as notorious in his own country and in Italy, as his miserable end is now to the world; but, as we were about to do so, we received a copy of the Journal des Debats, containing a paper on the subject, so full and interesting, written by one who was amongst poor Nourrit's most familiar acquaintances—Hector Berlioz, that we consider we cannot consult the reader's satisfaction so well in any other manner as by giving a translation of the article.—Ed. M. W.]

The melancholy end of Adolphe Nourrit has filled the whole artistical world with grief and dismay, and it is the third catastrophe of the kind which the pubhic has had to bewail within the space of a few years. But if the death of L. Robert, and that of Gros, were lamentable examples of the despotic power the imagination can exercise over weak and visionary characters, the recent suicide of our distinguithed vocalist shows us how the noblest and most reasonable pride may become fatal in its operation on the mind, when, without having known a wound or a check before, it is suddenly and rudely despoiled, as it were, of the shield which hitherto protected it. Nourrit entered on his career without undergoing any of those trials which usually fall to the lot of beginners -trials so severe and so long visited on the greater part. He was, however, destined to know them-but too late, at a period when the soul had lost that moral spring which gives it strength to bear up under reverses, and even enables it to rebound from them more vigorous and active than before. Unhappily he had read the actual dangers of his professional position with too literal an eye, and he drew from them an argument the disastrous consequences of which might almost have been foreseen. A feeble mind, conscious of its own feebleness, grows feebler under that very consciousness; as soon as the power of fear becomes known to it, there follows the fear of fear,* and, on the first perturbation, reason abandons it. It is to this defect of energy in the character of Nourrit, and to no other cause, that we owe his loss. He confessed as much to me himself, and illustrated it very clearly.

It was the evening of his farewell performance. Having shut myself up with him in his box during an interlude, with the object of once more endeavouring to combat his resolution, I showed him that all artists were compelled, in the course of their career, to undergo those vicissitudes which he was bent on escaping at any price. I unfolded to him the endless catalogue of difficulties and troubles which every man of us is called on, at one time or another, to encounter. I recalled to his recollection the innumerable marks of affection, of esteem, and admiration, which the public every day gave him, and of which at that very moment

^{*} M. Berlioz seems to have in recollection here a pleasant passage in Jean Paul Richter, who, in the description of a "timid gentleman's" journey by coach, (published amongst Mr. Carlyle's Specimens of German Romances) goes on with mixed humour and philosophy wire-drawing on the subject of fear, and talks of "fearing fear" and "fearing the fear of fear," &c. We believe, however, that the original of this conceit is in M. Berlioz's countryman, Montaigne.—ED. M. W.

he had just received so distinguished a proof. Nourrit wept a good deal; presently, recovering his voice, and interrupting me, "Enough, my dear friend," he said, "all that you say is perfectly true, generally speaking, but cannot be applied in my case. I was not born for such an existence. Entering at an early age on the stage, while my father still occupied one of the first situations at the theatre, I found—thanks to a combination of circumstances, including his kind solicitude—every door open to me, every path made smooth, every difficulty removed. My poor father dying, I remained stationed in the first rank at the Opera, where I have enjoyed the too easy privilege of just doing as I chosewhat I chose. Now I find an altered state of circumstances. A new talent with new claims presents itself; the public is fickle, and often less than just; I should be forced, in order to maintain my position, to struggle every day, every hour—I feel that the bare idea of such a contention might paralyse my efforts. I am absolutely unequal—not merely to sustain it—but even to engage in it. I must quit the stage—I shall quit it—let us speak no further about the matter."

Arriving in Italy with no well determined plan of action, and with an unfounded distrust of his own real powers, he made up his mind not without difficulty to reappear in public. The examples of Rossini and Barbaja hardly sufficed to win his consent to the step. Undoubtedly it had been better for him to have persisted in his refusual; for, while he had cut short a splendid career in Paris to avoid a struggle, he only went to Naples to engage in another—all the more riskful for being unexpected. He went to sing before a people habituated to whatever is great and marvellous in the vocal art, and who would be sure not to take into account those dramatic excellencies which, in our eyes, gave to his performance so high a value; he went to face an audience which applauds nothing but vocal displays, and which does not even applaud them, or anything else, when, as frequently happens, the king is present at the performance. went to encounter a mean, yet intolerant, spirit in criticism, which forbade the production of several works on which he had a right to found the most flattering hopes, and in which his liveliest interest was engaged. Perhaps, after all, he did but consider his sojourn at Naples as a temporary exile, to which was soon to succeed his triumphal restoration to the theatre of his former glories; when his voice—which had latterly declined in power almost from day to day—began to give him uneasiness, and to convince him that he embraced a chimera. If such was the case, this final despair, this dreadful act of suicide, becomes perfectly intelligible, in the case of an artist like Nourrit, at once weak and sensitive.

The unhappy incident to which the representation of Norma gave rise, only hastened on the inevitable catastrophe. Nourrit's religious sentiments were insufficient to counterbalance the passion of his mind—as in the case of so many others who have come to the same melancholy end. His ardour, indeed, in the cause of religion was great, and proceeded to the extent of proselytism. He had projected a system of "theatrical religious instruction and reform;" he wished to expound this system in a work of which he has spoken to me, and of which it is probable that he had already sketched the plan. His predilection for this species of theological philosophywas such, that in conversation he would revert to it every instant, and he allowed himself to draw on discussions in connection with the subject, without aim or end, and in spite of the well-known incredulity, and even antipathy to them, entertained by many of his friends. One day I was obliged to remark, "Why engage on a ground where all the disadvantage is on your own side? You see I listen to you without emotion—even as I should to the dreams of a sick man, whilst every answer of mine gives you the acutest pain." "Yes," he replied, "I confess they do give me pain."

Nourrit, whose literary education must not be judged of from certain verses known as his, had an extensive knowledge of art in the largest sense of the word, and he applied himself unceasingly to its cultivation. He did not always enter, immediately, into that which was foreign from the habits of his mind, but when he had time to digest a new idea he was not slow to appreciate it, and he could determine its extent with much acuteness. Thus the first reading of Shaksperé Hamlet only left on his mind the impression of a fantastic work without order or clear design; "I can well comprehend Macbeth," he said, "and the grand

lesson his grasping ambition teaches; but Hamlet does not move me, because it seems to me to offer nothing but obscurity." A year afterwards Hamlet was an object of worship to him; he read it unceasingly, and regarded it as the chefdreuvre of the human mind.

His musical affections in my opinion, were somewhat too capacious. His earliest were for Gluck; and I could not very well explain to myself, how he came, at a later period, and without resigning any part of his respect for that great and powerful genius, to entertain an almost passionate regard for works which—had he, as before, argued the motives of his admiration for the author of Alceste-ought to have inspired abhorrence and contempt. However that might be, never had Gluck a more faithful interpreter, The three parts of Renaud, Pylades, and Orpheus, which he has frequently performed, may convince us how much he would have made of those of Achilles and of Admetus, which he never undertook—I know not why. The ravishing languor of his singing in the famous description given of Armida, "Plus j'observeces lieux;" in the duet in the same opera, "Aimons-nous;" in the air in *Iphigeine en Tauride*, "Unis des la plus tendre enfance;" and in the romance in the first act of Orpheus; used by contrasts to give peculiar force to the energy, the bouyant enthusiasm, the dignity, and the tragic passion which he put into other parts of those three characters I have mentioned, he attacked, especially, the opening of that air of Renaud "J'aune la liberte, rien n'a pu me contraindre a m'engager jusqu' a ce jour, with incredible spirit. Nor have the frequenters of the opera forgotten the heroic elevation which characterised his delivery of the air of Pylades, "Divinité des grandes âmes," nor the manner, equally ingenious and novel, in which he gave the morsel in "Echo et Narisse," introduced by him at the end of the first act of Orpheus—"O transport! ô désordre extrême!" As to the numberless parts which he has created in the modern school, with so much success, they are too familiarly known, to render it necessary to calculate the debt which our composers owe him,

Lastly, it is to Nourrit that the honour of having popularised Schubert in France belongs; without him-without his persevering efforts, his warm and contagious zeal for those admirable lieders—without the translations of them that he has made-without the exquisite sensibility, the deep understanding with which he sang them-our publishers would not have dared to publish the collections of Schubert; which would probably have never been appreciated to this day, but by a few connoisseurs, and a great source of enjoyment would thus have been shut out from the public. Alas! it was a great misfortune for Nourrit, that, fixing his regards obstinately on a painful present, he did not look forward to a future which could have awarded him a position in France still better and nobler than that which he had lost! His experience in all matters relating to dramatic music, his activity, his honesty-these were appreciated; and who knows but in a few years some great task worthy of his ambition might not have been confided to him, the accomplishment of which would have redounded to his own honour as much as to that of the heart he cherished! It is equally a sad misfortune for those musicians of France who had themselves entertained this flattering hope; for in this day they behold the consequences of the marriage of art and industry, and experience proves to them, in a manner not a little atrocious, that the children thence born-thanks to the domination of the better half in this strange marriage-are sufficiently shortlived!

SPOHR'S THEORY OF VIOLIN PERFORMANCE, AS EXHIBITED IN HIS SCHOOL FOR THAT INSTRUMENT.•

It is difficult to decide whether gratitude or admiration is the stronger feeling in the lover of music, when he sees a great master quitting his own exalted studies to play the pedagogue and help forward young students. Diligence in composition may be mere self-love; the finest taste, the most inveterate scorn

Spohr's Violin School, translated from the original German, and dedicated to Professors of the Violin, by the Translator, Wessel & Co.

of "the base and popular" in musical style may be resolved into vanity, (an ungrateful construction, certainly, yet a possible one), but when a great composer voluntarily increases the number of those who participate in his own pleasures, he gives the last pledge of his sincere and unselfish attachment to art. Spohr and Hummel have, perhaps, rendered as great services to the musical world, by putting that system into a practical shape which wrought their own perfection on the violin and piano, as by their best compositions. Both have proceeded from the elements, even from the baby lesson to the finishing study of the accomplished artist, and the present generation, with the advantage of such schools, ought far to outshine in practical music, all that has been hitherto known. Spohr goes to the root of the matter in a right earnest German fashion. He addresses to parents, the teacher, and the learner, observations that are full of sound sense and valuable experience; and the young amateur having decided to study the violin, he puts an instrument into his hands at the first lesson, and thus, by the comprehensiveness and completeness of his system, saves the instructor an infinite deal of labour. We give a passage from his introduction:

"To a parent desirous of having his son instructed according to my plan, I beg to address the following observations. The violin is a most difficult instrument, and is really only calculated for those who have a great inclination for music, and who, from advantageous circumstances, are enabled to study the art thoroughly. To the amateur (if he likewise possess the requisite talent) it is only recommendable if he can set apart for practice at least two hours every day. With such application, if he do not attain to the greatest proficiency, he may nevertheless make such progress as to afford himself and others great enjoyment of music, in quartett playing, in accompanying the pianoforte, or in the orchestra. Whether the youth be intended for the profession or not, it must be the parent's first care to choose for him a qualified and conscientious master. This is of more importance as regards the violin than any other instrument. Faults and bad habits are too easily acquired, which time and great labour can alone remove. It is for this reason that I would at once have an experienced master for the pupil, in order to avoid the evil consequences of first neglect; and such teacher should be bound to adhere closely to the rules contained in this instruction book. As it is difficult, nay almost impossible, to discover, before the commencement of instruction, whether the boy have a talent for music or not, the parent will do well to wait till he shows a decided inclination for music in general, and for the violin in particular. After a few weeks, the master will be enabled to determine with certainty whether the boy have the requisite talent for violin playing, and discernment sufficient to enable him to procure a pure intonation, without which it would be better to discontinue the violin, and to choose some other instrument, on which the intonation does not depend on the player-namely, the pianoforte.

"At what age the instruction on the violin should be commenced, must mainly depend on physical structure. If strong and healthy in the chest, seven or eight years of age is a proper time. At all events it must be in the age of boyhood, as the muscles then are most tractable, and the fingers and arms more easily managed, than at a more advanced Unless the boy be very young, a violin of the ordinary size may be given period of life. to him; a smaller one only if he find that inconveniently large. A good and old instrument will materially assist him in producing a good tone, and neat fingering. One hour's instruction every day, if time and circumstances permit, is requisite for the first months, and as the pupil's first eagerness very soon abates, and a daily practice between the hours of lessons being nevertheless very necessary, he should be encouraged as much as possible, and the occupations of the day be properly regulated to prevent either mental or bodily fatigue from too long continued practice. Parents also could beneficially influence the improvement of their son by showing themselves interested in his progress; they should sometimes attend his lessons, and as an encouragement and reward for farther diligence, take him to concerts and other places where he may have the opportunity of hearing good music. If the parents themselves be musical, it will prove a great inducement to their

son to let him join (according to his abilities) in their musical parties."

At the close of the introduction the whole anatomy of the violin is investigated in several chapters—the pupil is to be made fully acquainted with the construction of the instrument on which he performs; able to string and unstring it for himself, and to remedy on the spot any little accident which may happen to it.

The second division of the school consists of practical exercises from simple scales harmonized for two violins, up to studies of the greatest difficulty, written in Spohr's delightful style, and accompanied by the remarks which are most valuable to a learner. The student is throughout brought more as it were

into personal intercourse and communion with the author of this work, than in any similar one with which we are acquainted—under a conscientious master he will really be the scholar of Spohr, and this, if he understand it aright, is a great privilege.

The third division of the work supposes the scholar in condition to attack a concerto, and after some preliminary remarks on delivery, or style in general, &c., the author proceeds to give two concertos, one by Rode, and one by himself, as fitting lessons, with a running commentary on the mode of performance of each solo. We must quote some passages of the remarks just alluded to.

"Style is the manner in which the singer or player performs that invented and noted down by the composer. If it be confined to a faithful delivery of what is written it is called a correct style-if the performer, however, adds of his own, and be capable of intellectually animating the subject, so that the hearer may discover and participate in the intentions of the composer, it is called a *fine style*, in which correctness, sentiment, and elegance, are united. A correct style of delivery naturally precedes the fine style. A correct style requires perfect intonation, exact division of the notes in a bar, according to their duration, a strict observance of time, of light and shade, and also of the different kinds of bowing, slurs, double turns, shakes, &c. A fine style requires, besides the preceding, the following technical expedients: - 1st, the finer shades in the management of the bow, as regards, the character of tone, viz., strong, even, rough, soft, fluty, or in the accentuation or separation of the musical phrases. 2nd, the artificial shifts, which, are not used merely on account of an easier mode of playing, but for expression and tone, to which also belongs the gliding from one note to another, and the changing of the finger on the same tone. 3rd, the tremolo in its four degrees. 4th, the increasing of time in furious, impetuous, and passionate passages, as well as the retarding of such as have a tender, melancholy, or doleful character. But all these means lead to a fine style only when good taste watches over their application, and when the soul of the performer guides the bow and animates the finger. When, therefore, the scholar is so far advanced as in some measure to command the mechanism of playing, it will then be time to cultivate his taste and awaken his sensibility. The best way, probably, is to let him often hear good music and distinguished singers and performers, pointing out to him the beauty of the composition, as well as the method used by the singer or player to heighten the expression and give effect to the piece.'

We hold it needless to expatiate on the quality of the music which forms the exercises of the student in this volume; SPOHR's fame both as a violin player and composer for his instrument is a sufficient guarantee that nothing is wanting in that department. The opinions of the author upon his own instrument, as connected with the orchestra, and with music in general, cannot, however, be passed over in the same way; first, because it is a good fortune seldom enjoyed to be able to discuss sentiments and compare notes with a great master; and secondly, because those who are least interested in acquiring the technical difficulties of the violin, may here read with the same avidity as the professed And it is to be observed, that though Spohr has with laborious minuteness given the means to the attainment of practical eminence in its highest degree, he yet never fails to impress upon the student that that eminence is still but the means to an end. His practical rules are to astonish the concertroom, but his theory is to satisfy the musician. As long as the result of a great execution is to add refinement to music, to the full prosecution of that object, practice is good :- beyond that point, worthless and hurtful.

"On the delivery or style of playing concertos.—The concerto being generally produced before an audience, in a large room, and with the accompaniment of a numerous orchestra, requires above all a full and powerful tone. This does not necessarily exclude the more delicate shades of playing, as the violin possesses the peculiarity of making even its softest tones heard at a considerable distance. Consequently the performer can develope, in a concerto, the whole extent of the different degrees of light and shade of which the violin is capable. The intention of concert playing is to show the skill of the performer, and pre-supposes the most complete command over all technical difficulties. The scholar should not risk the public performance of a concert or other solo piece, until he has so thoroughly overcome all its difficuties, that success cannot be affected by accidental circumstances, such as great heat in the room, trevidation at a first appearance before the public, or by an unyielding accompaniment. It is not enough to conquer difficulties, they must also apparently be done with elegance, and without exertion. Then only will the hearer have undisturbed enjoyment of the fine science



of the artist. To the highest mechanical perfection in concerto playing must be added a sentimental delivery, as without it, the most brilliant playing gains only a cold admiration. • • • The scholar should, therefore, for a public performance, select a composition which will display not only his capabilities, but which possesses sufficient intrinsic merit to satisfy the most cultivated ear, without taking into consideration the merits of the performer."

SPOHR, great performer as he is, is not the man to be satisfied with a display of mere manual power in the concerto; he stipulates for good music, and thus attacks the vanity of the artist in its strong holds. The player, then, who will command true respect (be it remembered on whose authority this is advanced) is only permitted to display his skill through the medium of a composition which is in itself interesting. How many tiresome hours can every concertgoer number in his own experience, spent in listening to dexterity of hand, and nothing more! Bravura pieces need not, of necessity, be bad music; and if the artist be jealous of playing compositions of the highest beauty, on account of the attention which the composer is apt to withdraw from the performer, be has still one course left, and that is to compose his own music. If he cannot compose, he must be the humble servant of those who can.

The doctrines contained in the chapter on quartett-playing, make us long to

hear them reduced to practice, and by the author himself.

"On the delivery or style of quartett-playing .- A new kind of quartetts have been lately introduced, in which the first violin has the solo parts, and the other instruments merely an accompaniment. To distinguish them from the regular quartett, they are called solo quartetts (quatuors brillans.) They are intended to give the solo player an opportunity to display his musical talent in small circles. This style of delivery may be classed with that of concerto pieces. All remarks on the manner of playing the concerto are applicable to these and similar solo pieces with accompaniment of three or four instruments-variations, pot-pourris, &c., with this exception only, that in a smaller space and with weaker accompaniment, the tone of the instrument is not to be extracted with the greatest force. All roughness, when the performance is close to the audience, should be carefully avoided. The delivery of the quartett demands a very different treatment. In such a composition it is not intended that one instrument should exclusively predo inate, but that each should enter into the spirit of the composer, and delineate it accordingly. The power of tone on the first violin, and the manner of playing, must be in keeping with the rest, and where it is not the principle it should remain subordinate. As the style of delivery should always proceed from the idea and spirit of the composition, it is required of the solo player in the quartett to lay aside his peculiar manner of solo playing, and accommodate himself to the character of the music. Until he be capable of this, he cannot discover the character of the separate parts of the quartett, and give proper effect to the variety of style displayed in classical compositions. This will convince the student how much is required for perfect quartett playing; and though perhaps, less mechanical skill is called for than in a concerto, yet it demands more of refined sentiment, taste, and knowledge. The combinations of these qualifications will perfect the quartett player; and nothing is more calculated to obtain it than diligently playing those compositions. No opportunity ought, therefore, to be lost of joining a good quartett party. The student should commence with the second violin, and learn the difficult art of accompanying. This consists in a facility of agreement with the first violin in power, in the trifling changes of tone sometimes caused by the first violin, and in strictly adhering to the prescribed bowings, slurs, —light and shade—without, however, the f becoming shrill or conspicuous, unless expressly marked. The style of a good performer is to be attentively observed; and if the student is then inclined to venture on the first violin of a quartett, he must mark his part previously, and practise it exactly as a concerto piece. Our principal violin quartett composers were no performers, at least they were unacquainted with the mechanism of the violin. The marking of their bowings in their quartetts is, therefore, more faulty than in their concertos.

These are curious facts, but to whom does the author allude? If to Haydn or Beethoven, as we suspect, it would be interesting and instructive to compare the faulty examples with the suggested improvements. It is, perhaps, too much to expect that a composer shall be aware of all those minutiæ in the art of bowing, which are found so effective in performance—life is hardly long enough to learn the art of composition, without reference to the mechanism of instruments—and yet, it is certain, that no one can write well for the orchestra who has not more than a general notion of the manner in which his ideas will be produced.

In Mozart's operas, the bowing is marked from the beginning to end, not merely staccato or legato, but the bow is employed in all its variety of uses. Modern authors leave the violins in the orchestra to get through their passages in any way that it may please them.

"ON ORCHESTRA PLAYING AND ACCOMPANIMENT. - The orchestra playing of the violinist differs from the concerto and quartett playing, principally because the same parts are performed by several others at the same time. Each performer ought to agree as much as possible with the other in intonation, time, accentuation, light and shade; and lastly, in the division of the bowing. The division of each portion of a bar, according to the value of its time, must in orchestra playing be strictly observed. The tempo rubato (a slight delay on a single or more notes) in the solo of great effect, cannot here be tolerated. The same applies to accents used in the solo. No deviations from the P's and F's is permitted, nor, as in solo playing, any new shades of expression. The greatest difficulty consists in the strict agreement of the bowing of violinists in the orchestra. Even in the most practised orchestras it is much neglected. One principal difficulty may be traced to the negligent and faulty markings of the bowings in orchestral pieces (more erroneous than in concerto and quartett music), and also that the violinists of an orchestra never originate from the same school. Thus each has a different method of bowing. The unity of the violinists in the up and down bows, while pleasing to the eye, is absolutely necessary for giving proper accentuation, light and shade in the tout ensemble of the performance. Under this impression, I beg to remind the orchestra player of the old rule, which prescribes the accented parts of a a bar to be taken with a down bow and finish with an up bow. The leader has the responsibility of correcting and filling up erroneous or omitted markings of the bowing (particularly where several rehearsals take place, as in operas, oratorios, symphonies), and of endeavouring to effect the greatest possible unity. Further rules for orchestral playing are to avoid every addition of turns, double turns, shakes, &c., likewise all artifical shiftings, the sliding of one tone to another, the changing of the fingers on one tone; in short, every embellishment properly belonging to the solo. Appogiaturas, or double turns found in an orchestra part, require the leader strictly to determine the length of the former, and the manner of executing the latter, that they may be uniformly played by all violinists. The time given by the leader or conductor is to be strictly followed, and an occasional glance at him will ensure the better observance of it.

To the orchestras of Paris, Naples, and Prague, and to those only, does our author allow the merit of having attained an exact uniformity in their method of bowing. Here, though some approaches to it are made at the Philharmonic concert, it is far from enforced in its rigour, and we may now see on what point there is room for improvement. In human things perfection is but a relative notion which is not to be too closely embraced, for experience is constantly refining the standard of judgment, and what was thought perfect to day appears but indifferent or defective to-morrow. If artists, therefore, are not humble enough to imagine themselves in an improvable condition-if they decide that the state in which they are is incapable of amendment, they will have the mortification to find themselves surpassed by all who keep open to good advice. Indeed, the most finished master has ever most of the spirit of the learner. The volume of Spohr places before every performer, professional or amateur, whether in the solo or in the orchestra, the duties which he owes to music and to himself -he is addressed as one attached to the art, and not enamoured of his own skill. If he sincerely wish to improve himself into a complete musician through the cultivation of the violin, this book will show him the way. The author anticipates some gratitude for his pains, and closes his work in this pretty manner:-" When the student has arrived at eminence in his art, he will then appreciate the labours of him who has attempted to facilitate his career as a

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

Sir,—In your last week's number I read with some surprise the following article—
"Mr. F. Cramer. We regret to hear of the continued indisposition of this gentleman,
whose place at the Royal Academy has lately been supplied by Mr. Loder, and at the
Ancient Concerts by Mr. Mori." Now, sir, as I cannot for a moment think that you
would, knowingly, sanction and publish to the world an article not founded on truth,



and which, moreover, is, as I conceive, calculated to injure me in my professional pursuits, allow me to ask—and I trust you will have the candour to tell me—is the paragraph in question your own writing, and, if not, who is your informant? 'Tis true I have been il; but so far from being in a state of "continued indisposition," my health (thank God!) has been, and still is, improving daily; and as to "Mr. Loder's supplying my place at the Royal Academy," I never heard a word on that subject until I read it in your publication.

Respecting the Ancient Concerts, only one has taken place, when Mr. Mori officiated for me, as my medical friend advised me not to return to my professional avocation too soon; but I did then, and still do, entertain confident hopes of resuming my old situation

as leader at the next concert.

In justice to myself, and for the satisfaction of my friends in the country, as well as in town, I trust you will insert this letter in your next number.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

FRANCOIS CRAMER.

P.S.—I have never been in the habit of intruding myself, or my name, upon the public, and it is only in the discharge of a duty, which I consider every man owes to himself, that (reluctantly) I do so on the present occasion.

37, Upper Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, March 25, 1839.

[The paragraph in question was of our own writing, but was written on information communicated by a friend, who is certainly as innocent of saying what is not true, as he is of any intention to hurt Mr. Cramer. Mr. Cramer's indisposition, and the manner in which his public duties had been fulfilled for him in the interval of his absence, were announced as facts of sufficient interest for musical readers; and as he himself says nothing in contradiction of them, we cannot, we confess, perceive what object is answered by the above letter. Mr. Cramer must have a very strange opinion of us, and of those about us, if he imagines that the report of his indisposition was inserted with a view to "injure him!" However, our readers will collect one thing from this letter with satisfaction at least, viz., that Mr. Cramer's health is improving.—Ed. M. W.]

MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.

Munich.—The veteran "composer, Simon Mayer, has returned to Italy in good health, accompanied by the Bavarian Kapellmeister Aiblinger. Mayer's visit to his native city, after an absence of more than fifty years, in which he has had a most successful career as a dramatic composer, was held to be an occasion for some extraordinary demonstrations from the friends of music. Accordingly, on the night of his arrival with two Italian friends, he was greeted by a serenade; verses were offered; and in a few days a grand dinner was got up for him at one of the first hotels in Munich. Baron von Poissl presided, supported by Count Seinsheim, and the three royal Kapellmeisters, Stunz, Aiblinger, and Lachner. After many speeches and toasts interspersed with music, the old composer received a wreath of laurel, amidst the acclamations of the company. Mayer returned thanks with a modest embarrassment, and the evening terminated in high conviviality. Mayer is chiefly known in England by his Medea, that Pasta has rendered sufficiently memorable; but he is a voluminous author and one of great merit and originality.

PRAGUE.—Our young pianoforte player, Alexander Dreischock, is just setting out upon his first musical tour. The public will have reason to wonder at him, much as of late years they have wondered. His rapidity and power in octaves is monstrous; he rattles them out as fast as another player does single notes. His playing of Chopin's studies, which are among the most difficult of modern

works for the pianoforte, is most distinguished.

DRESDEN.—Thalberg is here. He has played at court, and also in public, on a magnificent pianoforte from the factory of Wieck. Miss Clara Wieck, the daughter of this instrument-maker, is at present in Paris, where the high encomiums passed upon her talent by Liszt, have procured her a flattering reception. Servais, the Belgian violoncellist, and his young countryman, Vieuxtemps, whose amazing precocity of talent on the violin astonished the English public

some seasons ago, are giving performances in concert with great success. Kalkbrenner has just published a scene dramatique for the piano, which he entitles Le Fou, and which in our editions is freely rendered "der Narr," (the fool,) so that whoever plays it will certainly play the fool. The argument is—a pianist disappointed in his first love, goes mad, and expresses himself on the pianoforte in all sorts of lunatic caprioles and frisks, somewhat similiar to those by which Don Quixote astonished Sancho in the Sierra Morena. The sentimentality of this absurd piece raises a smile in all hearers. Mrs. Alfred Shaw has arrived here and sung in several private circles with much applause.

Berlin.—The songs sung by Miss Clara Novello in the various concerts given here by herself, and in conjunction with the Brothers Ganz, have been so much relished by the public, that Schlesinger, the music seller, has collected and published them under the title of the "Album of Miss Clara Novello." Theatrical music languishes in the city at present; except some adaptations from French pieces of a very superficial character we have had no novelty worth speaking of. Spontini's Cortez and Spohr's Jessonda have, however, been given at the Openhouse—the latter an expressive composition but rather heavy and undramatic.

Konigsberg.—The Philharmonic Society of this city have executed at their concerts this season a symphony in D minor by Ries, an overture by Lindpainter, Mendelssohn's "calm and prosperous voyage," Beethoven's overture to Leonora, and Bennet's overture to Melusina. The last is pronounced by the German critics to be a very neat, well-designed production, but of no remarkable originality. A musical traveller of this city, who has heard the compositions of Berlioz performed in Paris, pronounces them of really extraordinary merit, confessing that he at first listened with more than common prejudice against the romantic school, but that this feeling was gradually subdued by the great amount of novelty and excellence that the compositions contained. Berlioz, it is said, still suffers alarming illness from an affection of the chest.

METROPOLITAN.

MADRIGAL SOCIETY.—The sixth meeting took place on Thursday, at Free-mason's Hall, Charles Baumer, Esq., the treasurer, in the absence of the president and vice-president, in the chair. The following selection was performed:—

O clap your hands	voices.
Die hapless man	"
Come, clap thy hands Weekes	,,
Phillis hath sworn (2d part) Ditto	
O sleep fond fancyBennet	
At sound of her sweet voiceQuintiani	
Lo, where with flow'ry head Morley	,
Udite AmantiColombi	
Thus saith my Cloris bright Wilbye	
Fair OrianaHilton	
Love took his bow and arrowMorley	5 ,,
Since neither tunes of joyBennet	
Fa la laSaville	

The meeting was not very numerous, but the performance was excellent; several pieces in the above selection were encored by acclamation. Lord Oxford was a guest on this occasion.

QUARTETT CONCERTS.—The fourth performance of Messrs. Blagrove, Gattie, &c., on Thursday, in addition to quartetts by Beethoven and Mozart which are established favourites, and a quintett by Mendelssohn op 18, which is his finest chamber production and was first introduced to the London public by this party, offered the agreeable novelty of a quartet by Fesca in C minor. This writer, who closed his career some fifteen years ago at the early age of thirty-three, possessed a genius which has since that period been in constant estcem in the inner circles of quartett playing. Compared with other quartett writers his contemporaries, he may be placed nearer to Spohr than Beethoven. Fesca has less mannerism in his phrases of melody than Spohr, but at the same time less

vigour and ability in the working up of his subjects. His chief excellence is sweetness and character in his melody; his main defects, are want of simplicity of construction (especially in his early works,) and a too frequent appeal to the same sort of feeling. He has a constant tendency to the pathetic, without a due admixture of the lofty, the gay, &e., the consequence of which is that in long movements he is often feeble. He was a fine genius, however, who would have richly profited of experience had he lived; and taken altogether there are few

things superior in sweetness and delicacy to his best passages.

The quartett from the op 4 of Fesca is more equally written throughout and more free from the characteristic faults of the master than most of the others. The adagio is in particular a charming movement. The whole work was exceedingly well received and warmly applauded. Beethoven's quartett in D. op 18 is an old friend to every claesical musician; we need hardly say that it went beautifully. Mr. Hatton played the pianoforte in the second of Mozart's quartetts for that instrument, and displayed a good execution and a judicious musician-like reading of his author. It was highly gratifying to hear the stringed combinations of Mozart so nicely brought out as they were on this occasion, The Scherzo to Mendelsshohn's quintett which is full of whim and fancy was encored. The vocal pieces of the evening were performed by Miss F. Wyndham and Mr. Balfe.

A general advance in opinion has been made by the admirable players of this party during the present season. Quartetts well studied, rendered in perfect tune and with great expression in the details; unhackneyed vocal music; a remarkable variety in the selections, over which a fine taste manifestly presides as we may see by several new and excellent works first produced at these concerts—all these things conspire to give great distinction to the Blagrovian party and to render them favourites with the public. We wish them renewed success, and are confident that the more such quartett playing is heard, the more that

style of music will prosper.

EXETER HALL.—The Creation was performed here on Friday last, the solo parts being taken by Miss Rainforth, Miss Cawthorn, Messrs. Philips, Hobbs, We have seldom and A. Novello. The Hall was crammed to excess as usual. any thing to do but to praise the performances of the Sacred Harmonic Society, to whose spirited and successful exertions we attribute the commencement of an important reform in musical affairs. On the present occasion we have to speak in the usual high terms of the greater part of the performance, but we would earnestly bespeak consideration for the one exception we are about to make; we allude to the practice, now too generally suffered, of violating the scores of the great masters, by the addition of parts to furnish employment for the surplus podulation of our modern bands. This is becoming a positive nuisance, and ought to be put a stop to. If each member of our bands do no more than is put down for him, there is not one too many; but if every brazen person with a brazen instrument is to be at liberty to bray the public at his own discretion, and the scores of a Handel or a Haydn are to become mere vehicles of convenience for ophycleides, serpents, &c. to take their pleasure in-then "Joy to great Chaos!" One of these merciless engines of noise, was set loose on Friday night, and let to run riot all through the chorus of "The Heavens are telling," doubling the doublebass part, and putting down every other instrument by what may be called brute force. Haydn was always sparing of his brass instruments, well knowing that, in proportion to the great effectiveness when introduced in season, was their intolerable offensiveness in long and unceasing employment. In the score of the Creation the whole of the trombone parts together with part for the contrafagotto only occupy, in a separate place at the end, two pages. They are not introduced at all in "The Heavens are telling," but we find them occurring at the burst on "And there was light," also in the chorus "Achieved is the glorious work" where the bass trombone pairs with the contra-basso, and in one or two other places. We wish the authorities at Exeter Hall would take our admonition in good part and avoid occasion for it in future.

THE CONCERTS & la Valantino.—The musical public can hardly do better during this week of privation than step into the Crown and Anchor, and regale themselves with the spirited musical performances going on there. This even-

ing we perceive that the Jupiter Symphony of Mozart is going to be performed; and as this is the order of music we have before now expressed our desire to see adopted by these popular instrumentalists amongst their selections, we cannot but heartily recommend the above concert to public notice.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Character of George Benda.—He was famed for absence of mind and forgetfulness, many instances of which are related. Mildness and benevolence were also highly predominant in his character; but he was extremely sensible of any affront or disrespect, and did not readily forget it. He loved his children, yet left their education almost to chance. Rightly as he judged in the case of others, and good as was the counsel he gave his friends, he often mistook his own interest, and neglected the duties incumbent on the father of a family. His first passion, which he carried to excess, was to relieve the wants of others, his next was for society and cards, though with the exception of almost all games of chance; and he has often seriously said, that he could scarcely believe it possible for a man to be a good composer of music, who had no skill at cards or draughts. [This Benda was partially the model of Mozart in dramatic composition, and perhaps the greatest improver of the instrumental music of his country that has existed.]

Church Music Prostituted.—An *Ecce Panis* arranged to the prettiest airs of Bellini, was performed the other day in a church at Brussels, that goes by the grim denomination of Finis Terræ, much to the edification of the hearers, the honour of Belgian taste, and the credit of the music director, Snel, who presided over a hundred musicians. What will catholics and protestants permit next in church?

MARCHESI, the celebrated sculptor has finished the monument to Malibran, which is to be erected in La Scala at Milan. The bust of the great singer appears on a white pedestal, on which her most celebrated characters are inscribed; the genins of melody is near, with a lyre in her hand, and a face of deep sorrow. The erection of this memorial does much credit to Italian taste.

LIPINSKY, the celebrated Polish violin player, whose fortune hitherto has not corresponded with his desert, but who has been as poor as he is eminently clever and enthusistic, is appointed to a good employment in the chapel of the King of Saxony.

THE LATE FRENCH TENOR NOURRIT was the son of an actor and one of the best pupils of Garcia. From the father and instructor of Malibran he derived the passionate energy which characterised his style.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.—A communication was received on Monday last from this great public functionary, prohibiting the amateur performances at the minor theatre, Catharine Street, Strand, during Passion Week.

Lost Voices Recoverable.—In Monday's sitting of the Academy of Sciences M. Arago made a communication respecting a new application of a process of physics to the art of healing, the medical apparatus of condensed air contrived by M. Tabarie. It appears that a stay of more or less duration in condensed air has a very beneficial effect upon persons suffering from pulmonary complaints, though the manner in which it acts upon patients is not as yet very satisfactorily accounted for. M. Arago informed the Academy that M. Francœur, our distinguished mathematician, having, in consequence of a disease of the larynx, been visited with a total extinction of his voice, had been able to utter some words after three sittings in M. Tabarie's apparatus, and after the 11th experiment he had wholly recovered his voice, so as not only to speak but likewise to sing. It was of great importance to make a German sing, but much more so to render the same service to our celebrated artiste, Mademoiselle Falcon, who will shortly be indebted to M. Tabarie's process for the possibility of again commanding public applause.—Paris Paper.



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